

## Education for Homeless Children and Youth

**Issue Date:** February 1, 2005

**Key Words:** Homeless Education

**Summary:** The *McKinney-Vento Act* provides that homeless school-age children and youth have access to a free, appropriate public education that would be provided to the children of a resident of Ohio and is consistent with Ohio's school attendance laws.

### General Information

The United State Congress passed the *Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act*, Public law (P.L.) 100-77 on July 22, 1987. On November 29, 1990, the President signed into law the McKinney Homeless Assistance Amendments of 1990, P.L. 101-645. The *Improving America's School Act*, 103-382, was approved October 20, 1994. The *No Child Left Behind Act* was signed by the President on January 8, 2002 and reauthorized the *McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act*.

The *McKinney-Vento Act* provides that homeless school-age children and youth have access to a free, appropriate public education that would be provided to the children of a resident of Ohio and is consistent with Ohio's school attendance laws. The act also requires each state to review and undertake steps to revise such laws, regulations, practices or policies to assure children of homeless individuals and homeless youth are afforded a free and appropriate public education. The state must further ensure that homelessness alone not be sufficient reason to separate students from the mainstream school environment.

The objectives of the Ohio Department of Education for the program include the following:

1. Assure that each homeless child, and homeless youth of a homeless individual, has access to a free, appropriate public education;
2. Provide educational activities and services to homeless children and youth that enable them to enroll in, attend and achieve in school, and;
3. Develop and implement programs for school personnel and the general public to heighten awareness of specific problems related to the education of homeless children and youth.

### Purpose of the Grant

The state educational agency will make grants to local education agencies (LEAs) for the purpose of facilitating the enrollment, attendance and success of homeless children and youth.

### Use of Grant

Services may be provided through programs on school grounds or at other facilities. Where services are provided through programs on school grounds, the services may also be made

available to children or youth who are determined by the local educational agency to be at risk of failing in or dropping-out of school, except that priority for services shall be given to homeless children and youth. To the maximum extent practicable, services shall be provided through existing programs and mechanisms that integrate homeless individuals with non-homeless individuals. Services provided under this section are not intended to replace the regular academic program.

Services to homeless children and youth, including developmentally appropriate preschool activities, must be a collaborative effort as detailed under the *Improving America's School Act*.

**General Authority:** Section 723, (a)

(1) **In General** – The state educational agency shall, in accordance with section 722 (e) and from amounts made available to the agency under section 726, make grants to local educational agencies for the purpose of facilitating the enrollment, attendance, and success in school of homeless children and youth.

(2) **Services** – Unless otherwise specified, services under paragraph (1) may be provided through programs on school grounds or at other facilities. Where services are provided through programs to homeless students on school grounds, schools may provide services to other children and youth who are determined by the local educational agency to be at risk of failing in, or dropping out of, school. To the maximum extent possible, those services shall be provided through existing programs and mechanisms that integrate homeless individuals with non-homeless individuals.

(3) **Requirement** – Services provided under this section shall not replace the regular academic program and shall be assigned to expand upon or improve services provided as part of the school's regular academic program.

**Authorized Activities:** Section 723, (d), (1-16)

The LEA may use funds awarded under this section for activities to carry out the purpose of this subtitle, including the following:

1. Tutoring, supplemental instruction and enriched educational services linked to the achievement of the same challenging content and performance standards the state establishes for other children and youth;
2. Expedited evaluations of the strengths and needs of homeless children and youth, including needs and eligibility for programs and services (such as educational programs for gifted and talented students, children with disabilities, and students with limited English proficiency services provided under Title I, or similar state or local programs, programs in vocational education, and school nutrition programs);

3. Professional development and other activities for educators and pupil services personnel designed to heighten the understanding and sensitivity of such personnel to the needs of homeless children and youth, the rights and specific educational needs of runaway and homeless youth;
4. Referral services to homeless children and youth for medical, dental, mental and other health services;
5. Assistance to defray the excess cost of transportation for students pursuant to section 722 (g), (4) (A) not otherwise provided through federal, state or local funding, where necessary to enable students to attend the school selected under section 722(g), (3);
6. Developmentally appropriate early-childhood education programs not otherwise provided through federal, state or local funding, for preschool-age homeless children;
7. Services and assistance to attract, engage and retain homeless children and youth, and unaccompanied youths, in public school programs and services provided to non-homeless children and youths.
8. Before- and after-school services, mentoring and summer programs for homeless children and youth in which a teacher or other qualified individual provides tutoring, homework assistance and supervision of educational activities;
9. If necessary, the payment of fees and other costs associated with tracking, obtaining and transferring records necessary to enroll homeless children and youth in school, including birth certificates, immunization records, academic records, guardianship records and evaluation for special programs of services;
10. Education and training to the parents of homeless children and youth about the rights and resources available to their children and youth;
11. The development of coordination between schools and agencies providing services to homeless children and youth, as described in section 722 (g)(5);
12. Pupil services (including violence prevention counseling) and referrals for such services;
13. Activities to address the particular needs of homeless children and youth that may arise from domestic violence;
14. Adaptation of space and the purchase of supplies for non-school facilities made available under subsection Sec. 723 (a), (2) to provide services under this subsection;
15. School supplies, including supplies to be distributed at shelters or temporary housing facilities, or other appropriate locations, and;
16. Other extraordinary or emergency assistance needed to enable homeless children and youth to attend school.